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Summary record of the 1606th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Thursday, 5 July 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Leinarte

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Fifth periodic report of Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/5; CEDAW/C/LIE/Q/5; and CEDAW/C/LIE/Q/5/Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Liechtenstein took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that his Government, an ardent supporter of efforts to strengthen the treaty body system, appreciated the opportunity to prepare its report under the simplified procedure, which had eased the reporting burden for such a small State with limited human resources and allowed it to work more efficiently.

3. Liechtenstein had an unemployment rate of 1.9 per cent, the lowest in Europe, with the number of jobs in 2017 surpassing the number of inhabitants. The dual vocational education system, with students combining classes with work experience, facilitated young people's entry into the labour market and ensured low youth unemployment. The crime rate had fallen by 16.5 per cent since 2016 and social peace prevailed, which set the stage for the realization of women's and girls' rights in the country.

4. Progress had been made in advancing gender equality and women and men enjoyed de jure equality. Girls performed better than boys at school and more girls successfully completed upper secondary school than boys. Girls' take-up of subjects in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields was promoted through an innovative public-private partnership project.

5. There was a good representation of women in the Government, with women holding two out of the five ministerial posts since 2009. Women occupied half of the posts of ambassador in missions and embassies abroad, and gender parity had almost been achieved in the diplomatic corps. The heads of the Office of Statistics and the Data Protection Agency, among other positions in the national administration, had recently been filled by women. The Office of Justice, a crucially important and large office in terms of the number of staff, would soon be headed by a woman. In the previous parliamentary elections, however, women's representation had fallen from 24 per cent in the previous legislative period to 12 per cent, running counter to the trend in recent years. That situation had nevertheless provided an opportunity to explore the reasons for the decline and take action to remedy the situation. Furthermore, the main political parties had declared that they would aim for gender parity on their candidate lists for the municipal council elections in 2019, and the Equal Opportunities Unit of the Office of Social Services was raising awareness through the media of female political leaders to encourage women to stand for office.

6. With a view to achieving gender parity in political and economic leadership positions, the Government was focused on improving the balance between work and family life. Planned measures included the expansion of after-school programmes and lunchtime provision. Measures were also being established under a governmental working group on family policy to subsidize childcare for low-income families; and 4 of the 11 municipalities would shortly introduce longer school hours, subsidized by the State, to provide working parents with free childcare.

7. Legislative reforms had been carried out to strengthen women's and girls' rights. For example, the Criminal Code had been amended to include the notion of gender in the criminal offence of racial discrimination. Public incitement to hatred and discrimination on the basis of gender was now a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment of up to 2 years. The law governing sexual offences had also been amended to enhance victim protection and the list of offences that could be prosecuted ex officio was expanded to cover acts such as stalking and rape or sexual assault in marriages and partnerships. Proposed amendments to the Criminal Code would be considered in autumn 2018 to enhance protection for women against physical and sexual violence, which included defining as an offence the luring of persons to another State for the purpose of forcing them

into marriage, the tightening of sentences for sexual offences and the expansion of statutes of limitations.

8. The national human rights institution had been established in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights following a broad consultation process with civil society and other stakeholders. Discussions on human rights were held with civil society on a yearly basis and the 2017 discussions had involved over 30 representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and others. Women's organizations thus had the opportunity to raise challenging issues, such as unpaid care work and gender stereotypes, with the national authorities. Additionally, the Government facilitated constructive exchanges between civil society and high-level representatives of the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

9. The sustained efforts of all actors were required to tackle the remaining challenges in achieving de facto gender equality. In February 2018, the Government had adopted its national implementation strategy for the Sustainable Development Goals, prioritizing Goal 5 on gender equality. It was committed to a more active gender equality policy and stood ready to provide financial support for specific gender equality projects. Its foreign policy also reflected its commitment to achieving women's rights. The State party was engaged in extensive international advocacy and humanitarian development projects to improve the situation of women and girls.

Articles 1 to 6

10. **Ms. Ameline** said that she hoped that the Government would consider signing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. She was concerned by the exclusion of women from the line of succession to the throne of Liechtenstein, as efforts to achieve gender equality were required at all levels of society. She recalled the recommendation of the European Commissioner for Human Rights to adopt a national gender equality strategy that aimed at the full and effective achievement of women's rights. Commending the work done by civil society to promote those rights, she suggested the introduction of a mechanism to further institutionalize cooperation between the Government and NGOs.

11. Recalling the Committee's recommendation that a separate law against gender discrimination should be developed, she asked what was being done to apply the recent amendments to the Criminal Code aimed at combating discrimination. She would like comments on the possibility that certain vulnerable populations such as migrant workers might be denied access to justice because of a lack of legal aid or fear that their residency status could be withdrawn if they applied to the courts. She asked whether current training for judges and lawyers was adequate and, if not, what measures were envisaged to strengthen it. She asked whether the human and financial resources granted to the Association for Human Rights were sustainable and whether private sources of funding were sought, which might undermine the Association's independence. She wished to know whether the three full-time staff of the Association were sufficient and whether the Association was empowered to hear a matter without higher referral or take legal action on its own initiative and not only after it had received a complaint. She also wondered whether the Government would consider providing for group actions to enable associations to sue for damage in legal proceedings.

12. She hoped that the current dialogue would enable the delegation to convey to the Government just how high the Committee's expectations concerning the Sustainable Development Goals were, as they constituted a solid framework for the integration of women's rights into fair, inclusive and sustainable development. Lastly, efforts to combat tax evasion should be continued since the diversion of public funds from public policies adversely affected the development of society, particularly gender equality.

13. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that access to justice was guaranteed for all women in Liechtenstein. The various tasks of the Association for Human Rights included providing women and girls with information on legal remedies in cases of gender-based discrimination, assisting victims of human rights violations and issuing opinions on draft

legislation. It could launch awareness-raising campaigns and since its establishment had drawn attention to certain human rights issues through the media. While members of the Association could participate in judicial and administrative proceedings with the consent of a victim, the Association was not empowered to lodge a complaint on its own initiative. A legal advice service, partially funded by the Equal Opportunities Unit, was also provided by various NGOs, including the Information and Counselling Centre for Women, and the police. Bearing in mind that the State party was a small country, the Association was not understaffed. Government ministers and parliamentarians worked in close cooperation with NGOs and engaged in an ongoing dialogue. The State party did not intend to withdraw its reservation to the Convention concerning hereditary succession to the throne in the Princely House of Liechtenstein.

14. **Ms. Wieczorek** (Liechtenstein) said that there were no plans to introduce a separate anti-discrimination law as various national legal provisions, including the Constitution and the laws on gender equality, labour and persons with disabilities, already set out prohibitions against discrimination on several grounds.

15. **Ms. Walch** (Liechtenstein) said that, under the existing asylum regulations, free legal counselling was offered to all asylum seekers. The possibility of providing free legal counselling during the appeals procedure relating to an asylum application was under consideration.

16. **Ms. Clavadetscher** (Liechtenstein) said that NGOs played an important role in national gender equality policies. The Government financially supported organizations, such as the Women's Home and the Liechtenstein Employees Association, through a performance agreement. Many such organizations dealt with issues of central importance to gender equality, including education, employment, reconciliation of work and family life, support for families and legal advice for women. The Liechtenstein Women's Network and the Equal Opportunities Unit launched joint projects and held regular meetings to discuss, inter alia, the work of women's organizations and draft legislation.

17. **Ms. Wieczorek** (Liechtenstein) said that a range of training programmes were carried out for judicial officials and the police on the Convention, the Optional Protocol to the Convention and the Gender Equality Act. The Office of the Public Prosecutor met every two weeks to discuss new legislation and the provisions of the Convention. Judges and candidate judges received training on international treaties, the Gender Equality Act, the complaints mechanism and laws relevant to women's rights, such as family and inheritance law. Judges also received lifelong training and could participate in consultations during the drafting of new legislative proposals.

18. **Ms. Amelikae** asked what specific efforts had been made to increase women's political participation under the coalition agreement between the two governing political parties to foster gender equality. It would also be interesting to know what additional steps had been taken to raise awareness of national anti-discrimination and gender equality legislation and improve women's access to justice in that context.

19. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that the coalition agreement contained various measures aimed at eradicating gender stereotypes and achieving de facto gender equality. The Government remained committed to promoting the participation of women in politics and the labour market and had established the Working Group on Family Policy with a view to helping women and men reconcile the responsibilities of work and family life. The Equal Opportunities Unit focused its efforts on achieving de facto gender equality and had devised numerous measures to combat gender stereotypes and violence against women. It monitored progress made in that regard and reported its findings to the parliament on an annual basis. Gender equality policy had been aligned with national sustainable development initiatives, particularly with respect to Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality, and included the active participation of civil society and other relevant stakeholders.

20. **Ms. Bethel** said that she would like to know whether the Government intended to conduct an in-depth study into the impact of national fiscal policy on women in Liechtenstein and other countries. She also wished to know whether guidelines on handling

complaints relating to the gender impact of tax avoidance and financial transparency had been established.

21. **Mr. Bergby** asked whether consideration had been given to amending the laws on succession to the throne of Liechtenstein and adopting a system of absolute primogeniture.

22. **Ms. Hayashi** said that she would like further clarification of the State party's reservation to article 1 of the Convention.

23. **Ms. Schulz** said that she wished to know more about the recent changes to the national machinery for the advancement of women, including whether women's civil society organizations had been consulted on the abolition of the Equal Opportunities Commission and the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Unit.

24. **Ms. Hofmeister** asked whether Austrian judges working in Liechtenstein had received in-depth training on the provisions of the Convention.

25. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that Liechtenstein complied with all international financial reporting standards and had been one of the first countries to tackle tax evasion through the introduction of a comprehensive automatic exchange of information mechanism. National tax law also fully complied with all European Union standards. His Government had also implemented all the relevant European regulations on money-laundering. A survey on the gender impact of tax avoidance and financial transparency was therefore unnecessary. There were also no plans to change the line of succession or withdraw the country's reservations to article 1 of the Convention. There were a number of people working in the country's administration who commuted from Austria or Switzerland, including highly skilled persons in senior positions who were not nationals. As a small country, foreign workers played a crucial role in the effective functioning of the judiciary. Austrian and Swiss judges received the same training as national judges and were fully aware of the provisions of the Convention.

26. **Ms. Hayashi** said that she wished to know more about the establishment of the Association for Human Rights, including detailed information regarding the composition of the board and the number of women board members. She also wished to know whether the Government intended to increase the level of funding provided to the Association and strengthen its ability to participate in the investigation and prosecution of gender discrimination cases. It would be particularly interesting to learn whether steps had been taken to devise a national gender equality action plan with measurable targets and benchmarks to monitor progress.

27. **Ms. Ameline** said that she was concerned about the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions in political and public life. She wondered what concrete steps would be taken to fully implement article 4 of the Convention and introduce special temporary measures, such as quotas designed to promote gender equality and uphold women's rights.

28. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that the Association for Human Rights was a fully independent body established in accordance with the Paris Principles. Women made up three out of seven board members, one of whom held the position of Vice-President. The Association would receive government funding of 350,000 Swiss francs (SwF) per year for the first three years. It could, however, seek additional funds from private stakeholders and other external sources where necessary. The Government did not intend to introduce a general national action plan to promote gender equality. It preferred to conduct targeted gender equality initiatives with measurable outcomes.

29. **Ms. Clavadetscher** (Liechtenstein) said that numerous measures had been adopted to encourage more women to run for political office and to increase gender equality in political life, including a training course for women interested in entering politics and a media awareness-raising campaign containing a series of portraits of former or current women parliamentarians. Parliamentary round tables had also been held to discuss the issue of women's political representation and facilitate the search for eligible women candidates.

30. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that the national machinery for the advancement of women comprised the Equal Opportunities Unit of the Office of Social Services and the

newly established, fully independent Association for Human Rights. The sharp decline in the number of women Members of Parliament following the 2017 election had prompted a lively political debate concerning the introduction of quotas. Public consultations had also been held on the issue. While there were no immediate plans to introduce that type of special temporary measure, the country's system of direct democracy provided for individuals to request a public vote to amend national legislation or the Constitution on the matter through the collection of 1,000 and 1,500 signatures respectively.

31. **Ms. Chalal** said that, despite the State party's efforts to challenge stereotypes, the measures undertaken had not succeeded in breaking them, as evidenced by: the sharp fall in the number of women elected to the parliament in the 2017 legislative elections; the perpetuation of stereotypical images of women in the media, in particular migrant women, women with disabilities and lesbian, bisexual women, queer and intersex persons; the persistence of traditional academic subject and career choices; domestic violence; intersex genital mutilation; and other negative consequences of gender stereotyping. She wished to know what steps the Government would take to eliminate discriminatory stereotypical attitudes to women's and men's roles in the family and society and whether the Government would involve men and boys more closely in the struggle against gender bias and implement a specific strategy to reject stereotypes, especially in areas where women were least represented. She asked whether the State party's 2017–2021 programme to combat gender stereotypes and promote equality was sufficiently funded and included an evaluation mechanism. She would also like to know whether Liechtenstein was taking steps to encourage women to participate in sport or envisaged taking action to change attitudes towards educational and career choices in order to facilitate women's access to careers in sectors that generated employment such as the digital industry.

32. **Ms. Acar** said that she wished to note the positive developments in the State party, including the adoption of the law on protection from violence and the signing of the Istanbul Convention. However, there was no law on gender-based violence and there were serious problems of implementation of the existing legislation and data collection on domestic and other forms of violence against women. A small, rich State such as Liechtenstein could become a model for other States. Liechtenstein should adopt a comprehensive law on gender-based violence against women, in line with the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No. 19, and the Istanbul Convention. She wondered whether the amendments to the Criminal Code had not benefited women because it remained difficult to bring charges against offenders as a result of a very heavy burden of proof carried by victims. Cases had reportedly been dropped or thrown out of court because of contradictory statements and the absence of ex officio prosecution. Moreover, there had been a decline in the number of protection orders issued since 2013, which also pointed to ineffective prosecution of offences committed against women. She wished to know what specialized training was provided to both prosecutors and judges on gender-based violence and whether it was based on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Istanbul Convention, whether similar training was provided to the police and whether the school curricula had also been redesigned to include such subjects. According to the report, in 2016, the police intervened 19 times in cases of domestic violence, with 21 women and 8 men involved in the incidents. A protection order was issued in only one case, while the others were dealt with through police counselling or mediation. Such mediation was contrary to the Istanbul Convention. She would appreciate further information concerning those statistics.

33. **Ms. Gabr** said that the delegation's presentation did not mention the efforts of Liechtenstein to combat trafficking in women for prostitution. The Committee would welcome further information on the action envisaged to prevent and combat such trafficking. In its concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Liechtenstein (CEDAW/C/LIE/CO/4), the Committee had noted that the State party had been focusing its efforts on night club dancers and had recommended that it should widen its scope to include other vulnerable groups, including asylum seekers and children. The "Magdalena" project for the prevention of trafficking and sexual exploitation of women working as prostitutes had been discontinued in 2016, as few cases of trafficking for prostitution had been detected. However, prevention and awareness-raising activities were effective in

combating trafficking for prostitution, and the Committee wished to know if the State party planned to introduce other such activities in the future. Unaccompanied minors were vulnerable to being used by organized trafficking rings for begging, stealing and sexual exploitation. She asked what measures Liechtenstein would be taking to combat trafficking and increase regional cooperation in that area. From 2009 to 2017, police had investigated seven suspected cases of trafficking for prostitution; four of those were still pending, while three had been dropped. She would appreciate further information on the root causes leading to prostitution in the four pending cases and on the impact of the international instruments on child pornography to which Liechtenstein was a party. She would also be grateful if the delegation could elaborate on the role of the Office of Social Services and on its composition and mandate.

34. **Ms. Kranz** (Liechtenstein) said that Liechtenstein held an annual event entitled "National Future Day: Change of Sides for Girls and Boys", which was designed to encourage boys and girls to explore occupations that were not traditionally associated with their gender rather than base their career choices on stereotypical roles. Many companies were actively participating in the event, as was the University of Liechtenstein, and media coverage was prominent and positive. The regional development project entitled "Subject: Role Models" was another example of Liechtenstein's efforts in that area. The education curricula strongly encouraged an open-minded attitude, and discrimination and gender issues were discussed in the classroom from kindergarten onwards. Teachers were given training in the use of gender-inclusive language, and teaching material was gender-sensitive.

35. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that a recent evaluation of the portrayal of women in the media had noted that the country adopted a factual, neutral style. From May to September 2018, in the build-up to the 2019 municipal elections, a newspaper campaign would present a series of features on eight politically active women aimed at encouraging other women to come forward as potential candidates.

36. **Ms. Wieczorek** (Liechtenstein) said that the legislation of Liechtenstein, although lacking a dedicated law against gender-based violence, provided comprehensive protection against such violence, notably under the Criminal Code. The law on sexual offences had just been revised to include offences such as: threats against close family members; stalking; and rape or sexual assault in marriages and domestic partnerships. Female genital mutilation was prohibited under the Criminal Code. The violence protection law provided for the preventive removal of perpetrators of violence from the homes of their victims. Victims' rights had been strengthened. The Criminal Code was undergoing a revision that would provide further protection for women, with increased penalties for perpetrators. The statute of limitation period for certain crimes had been extended. New offences had been introduced to include the offence of violation of sexual self-determination and the intentional luring of adults or children to another State for purpose of forcing them into marriage. The parliament would probably adopt those revisions in early 2019 to allow for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention. With regard to the question concerning women's reluctance to take cases of marital violence and domestic rape to court for fear of acquittal of the accused, she said that such cases were thoroughly investigated by the police and the Office of the Public Prosecutor. Cases of conflicting statements did not automatically result in dismissal. Liechtenstein possessed a dense network of institutions to provide both legal guidance and psychological support to women victims of violence.

37. **Mr. Schädler** (Liechtenstein), responding to the query as to why no protection orders had been issued, said that none of the 21 cases of domestic violence recorded in 2017 had required the issuance of a protection or restraining order. He himself had examined all 21 cases and had confirmed that there had been no grounds for such orders. For example, one case involved threats being made by a former husband living abroad while his former wife was still living in Liechtenstein; in a second case, the woman had already been in a women's shelter; in another case of serious domestic violence, the accused had been convicted and imprisoned. The police made full use of protection orders if and when they were required and were aware of the relevant provisions of the law. While the Magdalena project had been suspended, a summary of its most essential points had been produced at the Round Table on Human Trafficking — a regular meeting of various

authorities, victim assistance organizations and others involved in uncovering potential cases of human trafficking and promoting awareness-raising on the topic — and an information leaflet on rights and obligations for sex workers, dancers and disc jockeys had been published. In addition, the national police and the Migration and Passport Office would carry out further checks to monitor the residence status, employment conditions and salaries of those persons, and the participants in the Round Table would monitor the situation and take further action if needed.

38. **Ms. Walch** (Liechtenstein) said that Liechtenstein had increased the sentences for human trafficking provided for under the Asylum Act and Foreigners Act to bring them into conformity with those in Austria and Switzerland. The revised law contained provisions on aggravating circumstances resulting in heavier sentences. In 2017, Liechtenstein had received 152 applications for asylum, of which 63 were from women, most of whom were travelling with their husbands and families. Only five applications came from women travelling alone. In 2018, so far there had been 112 applications for asylum, including 25 from women, but only 3 from women travelling alone, with 1 application from an unaccompanied girl. The first questions asked in the asylum interview included whether the applicant had been subject to trafficking and what had been the travel route. The police and the Office of the Public Prosecutor would be informed immediately in cases of suspected human trafficking. There had been no such cases in the past two years. The law provided for an exemption from the cancellation of residence permits of foreign citizens in the event of a separation or divorce in cases in which they had been victims of marital violence. A court order was not required for such an exemption, as the authorities would accept a police report or a doctor's report as proof.

39. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that Liechtenstein was in the process of establishing a financial sector commission made up of prominent figures from the around the world to produce a set of tools to detect financial flows linked to human trafficking and modern slavery.

40. **Ms. Kranz** (Liechtenstein) said that, starting in the 2019/20 school year, media and computer science would be introduced from the first year of kindergarten and programming from the third class on. The Government was about to invest heavily to equip the classrooms with the necessary devices and to train the teachers for the new courses.

41. **Ms. Walch** (Liechtenstein) said that the Migration and Passport Office and the National Police of Liechtenstein held yearly regional consultations with the neighbouring countries Austria, Switzerland and Germany on migration issues, including human trafficking.

42. **Ms. Acar** said that she wished to know whether the decline in the number of protection orders was due to a decline in domestic violence and invited the delegation to expand on that issue. She would also like to have further details concerning the mediation provided by the police in cases of domestic violence.

43. **Ms. Gabr** said she wished to have more information on the role and mandate of the Office of Social Services and on the measures the State party had put in place to identify cases of exploitation of unaccompanied minors. While increasing sentences for human trafficking offences was important, it was not a solution in itself: awareness raising was essential.

44. **Ms. Chalal** asked whether there was not a correlation between organized religion and the persistence of stereotypes. She also wished to know why the "Subject: Role Models" project had been abandoned.

45. **Ms. Ameline** said that the State party should review its legislation and procedures in the light of general recommendation No. 35 (2017) as it prepared for ratification of the Istanbul Convention. She asked why the application of the recent law criminalizing hate speech, xenophobia and homophobia had been so infrequent, what sanctions had been given following the 21 police interventions for domestic violence in 2017, and how many of the 152 and 112 applications for asylum made respectively in 2017 and 2018 had been granted. She also wished to know whether Liechtenstein had effective systems in place to

combat cybercrime and whether international cooperation functioned well against all forms of pornography and sexual abuse.

46. **Ms. Wieczorek** (Liechtenstein) said that the judiciary received instruction on all new legislation as and when it came into force and would therefore have training on the Istanbul Convention as soon as it had been ratified. Judges would also be trained on the criminal law provisions that would be introduced in line with that Convention.

47. **Mr. Schädler** (Liechtenstein), referring to paragraph 46 of his country's periodic report, said that the 21 cases of domestic violence dealt with in 2017 had been carefully assessed by the national police, which had determined that no protection orders were necessary. In all cases, police mediation or counselling had been provided, criminal files had been opened and the matters had been referred to the Office of the Public Prosecutor, which had achieved four convictions. As regards cybercrime, mechanisms were in place to monitor child pornography online and prevent child sexual exploitation in cooperation with the United States authorities, the network of law enforcement agencies of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Programme and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

48. **Ms. Clavadetscher** (Liechtenstein) said that the mandate of the Office of Social Services included providing financial support to vulnerable groups of persons and implementing social projects. For instance, it managed several projects for young people. One such project was aimed at preventing young people from developing substance-abuse problems; another provided psychiatric and psychological services for persons experiencing mental health issues.

49. **Ms. Acar** said that she would urge the State party to review its use of police mediation, in particular in cases of domestic violence. The systematic use of such dispute resolution procedures was permitted neither under the Convention nor under the Istanbul Convention. In that context, the State party should consult the Committee's general recommendation No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women.

50. **Ms. Clavadetscher** (Liechtenstein), replying to a question raised by Ms. Chalal, said that the "Subject: Role Models" project had not been suspended; rather, it had been implemented for a set period, which had now ended. Several of the project outcomes, such as the Role Models exhibition, were, however, still in use.

51. **Ms. Walch** (Liechtenstein) said that the Office of Social Services was immediately informed of any unaccompanied minors arriving in the country. It then assigned them to a guardian, or counsellor, and provided them with legal assistance. Unaccompanied minors were housed in special facilities for young persons, where appropriate services, such as counselling, were available. In 2017, 15 asylum seekers had been granted refugee status; a similar number had been accorded temporary admission status, which was similar to the European Union subsidiary protection status given to stateless persons or non-European-Union nationals. In the vast majority of asylum applications, however, the provisions of the Convention Determining the State Responsible for Examining Applications for Asylum Lodged in One of the Member States of the European Communities (the Dublin Convention) applied. Thus, most asylum seekers were transferred from Liechtenstein to the State responsible for processing their application.

52. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that, unlike in other European countries, many asylum seekers in Liechtenstein hailed from the countries of the Western Balkans, such as Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Liechtenstein had participated in the relocation and resettlement scheme of the European Union, taking in refugees from Greece.

53. **Ms. Wieczorek** (Liechtenstein) said that, while the majority of the population of Liechtenstein was Christian, almost 6 per cent of habitants were Muslim. The results of a survey on the situation of Muslims in the country, including the impact of religion and stereotypes, had recently been published. Regarding hate speech, the Violence Protection Commission was the entity responsible for combating violence in the public sphere, including ideologically and religiously motivated extremism. In that connection, a project had been launched to heighten media awareness about hate speech against women and

sexual minorities and inform them of the relevant national and international legal standards. Lastly, the Liechtenstein Association for Human Rights had recently investigated and taken to court a case of alleged discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Articles 7 to 9

54. **Ms. Ameline** said that she wished to know whether the results of the survey on the Muslim population would be used to develop integration policies. Regarding women's participation in public and political life, although the drop in the number of women in the parliament was alarming, it provided an opportunity for the Government to revisit its policies and introduce a battery of measures to foster women's greater representation, including through dialogue with political parties, incentives and quotas. In that connection, she wondered what measures were envisaged to increase women's participation in the 2019 municipal elections. In view of the country's small population, a comprehensive human resources strategy for civil servants was needed in order to prepare and train women, develop indicators to foster women's leadership and increase their representation on executive boards.

55. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that, while women's political representation had fallen, the number of women occupying leading roles in the public administration had actually doubled. Efforts were now focused on drafting a human resources strategy for the civil service, with an emphasis on women's empowerment and leadership.

56. **Ms. Clavadetscher** (Liechtenstein) said that, following the 2017 elections, a study had been conducted to find out why so few women had chosen to stand for election. The findings revealed that many women felt too overburdened by family and work responsibilities to run for public office. Discussions had been held with political parties, with many agreeing to take action to encourage more women candidates ahead of the forthcoming municipal elections. Other initiatives to boost women's political presence were also being considered, including finding ways to ensure that political parties assumed their responsibilities in that regard. A well-established politics course for women was one measure that had successfully fostered women's participation in public and political life. For example, some 70 per cent of women on the boards of NGOs were graduates of the course. Two new modules — one on social media training, the other on gender and diversity — were being added to the 2019 syllabus.

57. **Ms. Ameline** said that she would be interested to know whether there were plans to foster gender parity in party lists and, if so, whether they would be provided for in law or through incentives. She wondered whether any initiatives with the private sector were in place to ensure that women were broadly represented at all levels of the business world, including through recruitment, training, appointment and promotional opportunities. Similarly, she asked whether private enterprises were involved in the United Nations Global Compact, which sought to foster corporate responsibility in the areas of human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption. Industry players could play a crucial role in increasing women's representation on executive boards and boosting women's leadership.

58. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) said that the law did not currently provide for gender parity in party lists. Seats on boards of publicly owned companies and associations were open to all persons in Liechtenstein.

59. **Ms. Walch** (Liechtenstein), giving an overview of the politics course mentioned by her colleague, said that, in addition to the teaching aspect, the course offered networking opportunities and prepared women for leadership positions.

60. **Mr. Matt** (Liechtenstein) said that a number of private companies in Liechtenstein had recently been admitted to the United Nations Global Compact Network Switzerland, which promoted corporate responsibility and sustainability, with a view to creating a local network in the country. The private sector was therefore well aware of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals and the role it could play in their achievement.

Articles 10 to 14

61. **Ms. Eghobamien-Mshelia** said that, despite gender-neutral legislation in the field of education, there were significant disparities in the education and training of girls and boys, particularly in higher education and in subjects traditionally dominated by men. She wished to know what steps the State party was taking to remove barriers to women's university education and encourage educational institutions and employers to train and recruit women in non-traditional courses and professions. Referring to paragraph 88 of the State party's report, regarding efforts to optimize the transition from compulsory to further education, she would be interested to know whether the related measures were gender sensitive and whether there had been any measurable impact on the career choices and vocational, professional or entrepreneurial skills of girls and boys. She wondered why the project only started in the ninth grade of secondary school, since pupils should be thinking about which subjects to study for their future career prospects much earlier. She asked whether any comprehensive analysis had been undertaken to identify why girls seemed to be underperforming in the annual standard examination and what solutions had been implemented to reverse that trend, which was often linked to teaching methods and health, cultural and environmental factors. In that connection, she would be interested to know whether teachers and schools were accountable for the poor performance of their students, what teacher training was provided to improve the situation and whether any remedial classes were available to help girls to overcome the challenges they faced. Information on scholarships and other incentives aimed at bridging the educational gap between girls and boys and on the mechanisms in place to enable students to report bullying and sexual harassment should also be provided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.